

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 183505

14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 183505

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJ: IV PROGRAM: FREE TRADE UNIONS IN THE DEVELOPING
WORLD

REF: COLOMBO 2171; STATE 178714

1. SINCE SUBJECT PROGRAM BEGINS OCT 6 WE HOPE FOR EARLY
ADVICE OF CEYLONSE PARTICIPATION. WE BELIEVE IT HIGHLY
DESIRABLE THAT CEYLONSE DELEGATE ATTENDS AFL-CIO CONVEN-
TION. WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH AFL-CIO IN GENERAL TERMS
PROBLEMS RAISED REFTEL RE THONDAMAN CANDIDACY. FOLLOWING
ALTERNATIVES ARE PRESENTED FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

A. THONDAMAN REMAINS FIRST CHOICE OF AFL-CIO BECAUSE OF
HIS STATUS IN CEYLONSE AND INTERNATIONAL LABOR CIRCLES AND
BECAUSE OF HIS LONG-STANDING TIES WITH U.S. AND OTHER
FREE LABOR MOVEMENTS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 183505

B. VADIVEL OF CWC WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE AS STAND-IN FOR

THONDAMAN BUT ATTENDANCE PSI CONFERENCE WOULD CONFLICT WITH IMPORTANT PORTION SUBJECT PROGRAM.

C. UPALI JAYASEKERA OF UPTO WOULD ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE AS LEADER OF SIGNIFICANT CEYLONENE UNION WHICH HAS CONSIDERABLE CONTACT WITH FREE LABOR MOVEMENT. THIS CHOICE IS

SUBJECT TO EMBASSY'S CONFIRMATION THAT HE IS LOGICAL UPTO REPRESENTATIVE IN WAKE OF WILFRED PERERA'S DEATH.

2. WE UNDERSTAND GSL'S AUTHORITY TO CONTROL TRAVEL OF PERSONS RECEIVING FOREIGN GOVERNMENT GRANTS BUT BELIEVE GSL SHOULD BE AWARE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

A. THONDAMAN IS CHOICE OF AFL-CIO. HE WAS EXTENDED INVITATION ON TRADE UNION NOT POLITICAL GROUND. WE WILL HAVE TO EXPLAIN ANY NEGATIVE DECISION ON THONDAMAN TO AFL-CIO AND THEREFORE BELIEVE GSL SHOULD GIVE US SOUND JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR DECISION. NATURAL TENDENCY HERE WILL BE TO ASSUME NEGATIVE DECISION REPRESENTS GOVERNMENTAL INTERFERENCE IN NORMAL FRATERNAL TRADE UNION EXCHANGE.

B. AFL-CIO AND USG AWARE OF LARGE NUMBERS CEYLONENE TRADE UNIONISTS WHO ATTEND WFTU AND COMMUNIST COUNTRY TRADE UNION FUNCTIONS. FEW COME TO WEST AND PARTICULARLY U.S.

C. CWC DOES NOT HAVE MONOPOLY ON U.S. CONTACTS. EMBASSY MAY NOTE IF APPROPRIATE THAT UFG TRADE UNIONIST ALAVI MOWLANA RECENT GRANTEE AND LATE D.G. WILLIAM WAS OFFERED GRANT IN 1971.

3. WE REALIZE THIS DELICATE MANNER PARTICULARLY IN VIEW RECENT FEDERAL PARTY DECLARATION FOR AUTONOMY. EMBASSY AUTHORIZED PROPOSE ALTERNATE JAYASEKERA NOMINATION IF THONDAMAN CANDIDACY APPEARS UNLIKELY. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, NOTE THAT FAILURE GSL TO AUTHORIZE CEYLONENE PARTICIPANT COULD LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDING HERE RE GSL ATTITUDE TOWARD TRADE UNION EXCHANGE. RUSH

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